

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An accounting method for imposing, by a server, a charge for using an application program installed on a client, the method comprising:

5 a function performance detecting step for detecting that a predetermined function of an application program installed on the client was performed;

 a user specifying step for specifying a user who performed the predetermined function; and

10 an accounting step for imposing charges on a user specified by the user specifying step according to the frequency of performance detected by the function performance detecting step.

15 2. The accounting method according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined function is to output data from the client to an external device.

20 3. The accounting method according to claim 1, further comprising an application program type specifying step for specifying the type of the application program, wherein the accounting step imposes a charge according to the type of the application program specified by the application program type specifying step.

25

 4. The accounting method according to claim 1, further comprising a user registration step for performing user

registration in the case of the predetermined function having been performed for the first time.

5 5. The accounting method according to claim 1, further comprising an imposed charge amount informing step for informing a client which made a request about the amount of charges imposed at that time.

10 6. A server for imposing a charge for using an application program installed on a client, the server comprising:
function performance detecting means for detecting that a predetermined function of a program installed on the client was performed;
user specifying means for specifying a user who performed
15 the predetermined function; and
accounting means for imposing charges on a user specified by the user specifying means according to the frequency of performance detected by the function performance detecting means.

20

7. The accounting method according to claim 1, further comprising a charge deducting step for deducting automatically charges imposed by the accounting step from an account being under the user's name.

25

8. An accounting method for imposing, by a server, a charge for using an application program installed on a client,

the method comprising:

a function performance detecting step for detecting that a predetermined function of an application program installed on the client was performed;

5 a user specifying information obtaining step for obtaining information for specifying a user in the case of the performance of the predetermined function having been detected by the function performance detecting step; and

a user specifying information sending step for sending the server the information for specifying a user obtained by the user specifying information obtaining step.

9. A client for having a server impose a charge for using an application program installed on a client, the client comprising:

15 function performance detecting means for detecting that a predetermined function of a program installed on the client was performed;

user specifying information obtaining means for obtaining information for specifying a user in the case of the performance of the predetermined function having been detected by the function performance detecting means; and

20 user specifying information sending means for sending the server the information for specifying a user obtained by the user specifying information obtaining means.